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Two DMAT members honored by Sen. Patterson

LANSING—Just as the 2006 Atlantic Hurricane Season opened, Ann Marie Taylor and Russell A. McNamee were honored in a special ceremony in the Senate Chamber Thursday for their emergency relief work following the storms that struck the Gulf Coast last year. Taylor is a registered pharmacist from Plymouth, and McNamee is a Dearborn Heights fire captain and resident of Flat Rock.

Taylor and McNamee are members of the Michigan-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and were deployed to Gulfport, Mississippi, and New Orleans after the epic disasters struck.

State Sen. Bruce Patterson presented a Senate resolution to Taylor and McNamee, commending them for their immediate response to the disaster and for the valuable work they accomplished in the ravaged areas.

“Our country owes you a deep debt of gratitude and appreciation,” said Patterson. “You are models of selflessness to us all. Thank you! And thank you to your families, who supported you in this vital service during your absences.”

Taylor assisted on two different occasions, working outside hospitals; emergency rooms alone were unable to handle the flow of victims seeking help. Her work provided relief to many people and reduced the strain on local hospital staffs in Gulfport and New Orleans. Taylor recalled the devastation of wind and water damage in Gulfport, in contrast to the moldy wetness of New Orleans.

McNamee served as deputy team leader of the Michigan-1 DMAT for two weeks in Gulfport; in a second deployment, he was assigned to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Logistics Component within the National Disaster Medical System, in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Although he had planned to attend the Senate ceremony, McNamee was attending the funeral mass of a friend, Jason Makowski, a corporal on the Dearborn Heights Police Department who was killed in late May.

Thirty-eight DMAT members, representing the larger team, were honored in the Senate ceremony.

A photo is available at:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Patterson/Patterson.htm>

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